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ABSTRACT

Designed to evaluate the degree to which an essay is successful in giving information, this instrument is an analytic/holistic scoring guide for evaluating any writing that contains generalizations supported by elaboration. The following criteria are applied: (1) relevance--any statement that gives information or elaborates on information already given receives credit; (2) non-repetition--statements are not accorded credit more than once; (3) variety--a variety of statements should support the general thesis; and (4) depth--statements should be elaborated by giving a number of supporting examples or a lengthy narration. The holistic judgment is determined first and is based on the rater's initial impression of the paper. The analytic judgment, which may or may not agree with the holistic rating, is determined by analysis of the degree to which each criterior is met. Each generalization is also scored with one of five numerical values according to the quantity of supportive elaboration employed, ranging from unelaborated through outstanding elaboration. (This document is one of those reviewed in The Research Instruments Project (TRIP) monograph "Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts, Volume 2," published by the Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. The TRIP review, included here as an introduction to the instrument, describes the instrument's category (writing), title, author, date, age range (high school, entrance-level college), purpose, and physical characteristics.) (HTH)

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Scoring writing with an Informative Aim.

The measurement instruments contained in this document have been reviewed in a monograph (cited below) edited by William T. Fagan, Charles Cooper, and Julie Jensen, for The Research Instruments Project (TRIP), and funded by a grant from the Trustees of the NCTE Research Foundation:

Measures for Research and Evaluation
in the
English Language Arts
Volume II

The purpose of the editors has been to select and review measurement instruments pertaining to all aspects of research and evaluation in the English language arts, e.g. language and language development, literacy, literature, reading (including comprehension, teacher-pupil interaction, etc.), writing, and teacher knowledge and attitudes. In order to make some of the actual instruments reviewed more readily available, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) has cooperated with the editors by processing selected instruments into the ERIC system (see the 42 documents assigned Clearinghouse accession numbers CS 207 904-945).

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Category: Writing

Title: Scoring Writing with an Informative Aim

Author: Nancyanne Rabianski

Age Range: High School, Entrance-level College Students

Description of Instrument:

Purpose: To evaluate the degree to which an essay is successful in giving information.

Date of Construction: 1977

Physical Description: This instrument is an analytic/holistic scoring guide usable for evaluating any writing that contains generalizations supported by elaboration. The following criteria are applied: 1) Relevance--any statement that gives information or elaborates on information already given receives credit; 2) Non-repetition--statements are not accorded credit more than once; 3) Variety--a variety of statements should support the general thesis; 4) Depth--statements should be elaborated by giving a number of supporting examples or a lengthy narration. The holistic judgement is determined first and is based on the raters' initial impression of the paper. The analytic judgement, which may or may not agree with the holistic rating, is determined by analysis of the degree to which each criterion is met. Each generalization is also scored with one of five numerical values according to the quantity of supportive elaboration employed:

a) Unelaborated Generalization--This is the basic type of information imparted. It is a statement of what is basically believed to be true. No examples, specific generalizations, or narratives are given as explanations of the generalization.

b) Some Elaboration--The writer gives one or two examples or specific generalizations. For example, as a specific generalization a writer might state: "Money is important to my dad. He likes luxuries." As a specific example, a writer might state: "He bought a $670 television."

c) Much Elaboration--The writer gives three or four examples of specific generalizations: "Money is important to my dad. He likes luxuries. He bought a $670 television. He has three CB radios that he bought last summer.

d) Very Much Elaboration--The writer gives five or six brief examples, five or six specific generalizations, or a narrative of five or six clauses. In the case of the narrative, the length of five clauses usually ensures that it is truly a narrative rather than simply an allusion to an incident.

e) Outstanding Elaboration--Seven or more examples, specific generalizations, or narrative clauses.

Validity, Reliability, and Normative Data:

Guiding the development of the instrument were the theories of discourse of Kinneavy and Britton. The rating guides are based on an examination of 372 essays produced by 93 tenth graders as part of a doctoral study. Each student wrote four essays which were scored by four raters. The raters were experienced high school teachers, each of whom had received twenty hours of training. Inter-rater reliability for the total of all topics scored analytically was .885. Normative data are also available from the rating procedure's later use for the analysis of freshman writing at SUNY Buffalo.

Related Documents:

Academic Affairs Office. "Writing Abilities of Regularly-Admitted Freshmen at SUNY/Buffalo." Buffalo, NY: State University of New York, Fall 1979.

Rabianski, Nancyanne. "An Exploratory Study of Individual Differences in the Use of Free-Writing and the Tagmemic Heuristic Procedure." Doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1977.

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SCORING WRITING WITH AN INFORMATIVE AIM

Context of the Study Within Which the Rating Procedure Was Developed and Tested

In the fall semester of 1976, I conducted a research project as part of my doctoral study under the guidance of C. Lee Odell at SUNY at Buffalo. The study involved the collection of two pretest and two posttest essays from ninety-three tenth graders at a rural New York State school. Students wrote a generalization essay and a case study as a pretest and completed a parallel assignment as a posttest. Reporting and analogic, forms equivalent to the case study and generalization essay, are categorized by James Britton as two of the types of writing produced with an informative aim. (See Appendix A, Britton's function categories.) Not only the test essays but also all writing completed during the study's twenty weeks of instruction had an informative aim. Students were taught either free writing or the tagmemic heuristic procedure in order to improve their ability to gather ideas pertinent to a topic and inform the reader of these ideas.

The purpose of all writing tasks was to give information, but I could not find a reliable, tested measuring instrument to use in evaluating the degree to which each essay was

successful in giving information. Therefore, I devised an analytic/holistic scoring guide and twenty-four sample essays (three samples of each possible test topic provided for students) to use in evaluating the essays that resulted from the writing tasks assigned in the study. The sample essays and the rating guide were based upon my study of the 372 test essays produced by the tenth graders in the study. However, the basic scoring procedure developed is appropriate for evaluating any writing that contains generalizations supported by elaboration. A detailed scoring guide will appear, in the same form as when it was distributed to the raters, following a brief overview of the raters, their procedures, and the effectiveness of the procedures.

Overview of the Rating Procedure

As preparation for rating the essays, a secretary typed the students' essays and replaced their names with identification numbers. Each students' four test essays were then stapled in two pairs, with each pair composed of one pretest and one posttest essay. Finally, the secretary mailed the scoring guide to raters so that they could study the guide before our first meeting.

The four women who rated the papers were experienced. All of them were high school English teachers before they became graduate students in the Department of Instruction at SUNY at Buffalo. In addition, they had all previously worked as raters; two of them also were currently acting as a team in rating papers for another study.

Rating of the papers was preceded by four training sessions of five hours each. At the training sessions, the raters gave each sample paper a quick holistic rating followed by an analytic rating that the raters discussed until they reached agreement. At the conclusion of the training sessions, each rater took home copies of the test essays. The rating took place over the next two-week period. Once during that period the group gathered together to discuss the papers that had been rated. This discussion was only for the purpose of calibration; ratings were not changed in instances where disagreement existed.

Reliability

An inter-rater reliability of .885 was achieved for the total of all topics scored analytically. Because the analytic ratings showed good reliability, the data from the holistic ratings was recorded, but it was not analyzed statistically. However, at the calibration meeting held at the mid-point of rating, three of the four raters remarked that they found the analytic rating usually confirmed their holistic decision regarding the better of the two paired papers, except when they were tired or distracted while they were rating. Consequently, I have some reason to believe that there was a correspondence between the holistic and analytic ratings also.

Use of the Rating Procedure in more Recent Research

In the fall of 1979 at SUNY at Buffalo, the joint staffs of the Writing Place, the Department of Instruction and the English Department conducted an analysis of the

writing of entering freshmen. A portion of the study used my procedure for rating informative essays. ["Writing Abilities of Regularly - Admitted Freshmen at SUNY/Buffalo," Academic Affairs Office - SUNY at Buffalo (Fall 1979).]

Synopsis of the Rating Guide

The rating guide used by the raters in evaluating the test essays began with a statement of the pretest and post-test essay tasks. Raters were instructed that there were no particular topics used exclusively for the pretest and exclusively for the posttest. Consequently, the raters did not associate any of the topics with posttest essays. An association of this sort might have swayed their holistic ratings if not the analytic ratings.

Following the topics, the raters were given some criteria to use in making the holistic and then the analytic rating: 1. Relevance - any statement that gives information or elaborates on information already given should be given credit. 2. Non-repetition - statements should not be accorded credit more than once. 3. Variety - a variety of statements should support the general thesis. 4. Depth - statements should be elaborated in depth by giving a number of supporting examples or a lengthy narration. The raters were cautioned to be consistent in using these criteria to rate each pair of essays. The essays were given a score of 1-3. One meant little difference between the paired essays, two meant some difference, and three meant a great difference.

The following section of this paper is a reproduction of

the rating guide in the form that it was distributed to raters so that if another researcher is interested in using the guide, he/she will possess all the detailed instructions given to the original raters.

A GUIDE FOR SCORING WRITING WITH AN INFORMATIVE AIM

Two Types of Evaluation

All raters will score paired papers in two ways: 1) by selecting the better of the two paired papers following a holistic judgment of each paper 2) by analyzing the information given in the paired papers, deciding the degree of difference between the two papers, and again deciding the better of the two papers. The second time the selection of the better paper will be based on the analysis of information given in the papers. (The method of analysis will be discussed on pp.8-21.)

Criteria for the Holistic and Analytic Evaluation of Papers

The following criteria figure in both the holistic and analytic ratings: 1) Relevance: The aim of each of the writing tasks is to give information. The statements made showed, therefore, information about the particular writing topic in order to be accorded credit. For example, if the student is writing about someone he/she admires and makes the statement that the person is a grocery store owner, that does not mean that ownership should be given credit as pertinent information unless: a.) the writer states that he/she admires the person's ownership of the store b.) an elaboration of this statement makes clearer his/her feelings of

admiration; for example, a student might state: "I can't believe he really owns an entire grocery store. He paid for every penny himself."

In cases where the statement is not relevant to the topic, the student should not be penalized because the purpose of the study was not necessarily to improve the unity of a student's essays; the purpose was to increase the number, variety and depth of relevant ideas that a student could gather and present in an essay with an informative aim. Consequently, a student should not be penalized for stating an irrelevant bit of information; he/she simply should not be alloted credit for the irrelevancy. For example, if a student were to state that the person he/she admires lives in New York City, the rater should not count this as a relevant statement unless the writer explained or implied that living in New York City was admirable. In instances of this sort, the student might explain that the admirable person frequently fought off muggers or imply the importance of the surroundings by saying the admirable person was forced to deal daily with many types of people.

2) Non-Repetition: The statements should be considered by the raters to be informative as long as they are relevant and not obvious repetitions. For example, if a student wrote, "Mary is nice. Mary is pleasant," only one of these statements could be accorded credit since both statements say essentially the same thing. 3) Variety: There should be a variety of statements that support the general thesis.

For example, if the student is writing about a person he/she admires, then two of the traits cited might be thoughtfulness and intelligence. If the student were writing about a bus driver, the driver's traits might be alertness and responsibility on the job. These traits might be further explained by specific examples that vary in nature. For example, an alert bus driver may be alert to the fight breaking out in the back of the bus or to the kindergartener standing on the side of the road. 4) Depth: In addition to elaborating upon the general thesis by giving a variety of statements, another way to inform the reader is to elaborate a statement in depth by giving a number of supporting examples or a lengthy narration. For example, if a student has stated that a bus driver is thoughtful, the student may give a number of examples of times when the driver tried to please students, perhaps by waiting for them or returning lost belongings. On the other hand, the writer might describe in great detail a thoughtful incident, such as a time when a driver took up a collection and delivered flowers to a sick student in the hospital.

The above criteria of relevance, non-repetition, variety and depth were prompted by James Kinneavy in a discussion of the information given in referential discourse. Kinneavy states that worthwhile information consists of statements that exist within a specific context. In the case of the essays in this study, the context is a specific thesis that the writer is trying to explain. Any statements that do not aid in explaining this thesis are not

informative. Therefore, they are not relevant. Kinneavy further stated that the information must also be something that could not have been predicted in this context. He uses as an example the statement, "I shaved this morning." If the audience were his wife, this would not be informative because he shaves every morning, and she realizes this. (A Theory of Discourse. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971, p. 93.) In the case of the essays in this study, a naive audience is specified by the writing tasks. I considered the types of information that a naive reader would need and decided that if the readers were naive, they would need a variety of explanations in order to understand the topic fully. Some of the more important or unique statements would have to be explained in depth also. Therefore, variety and depth are important in explaining the thesis to a naive audience.

Holistic Scoring

In the holistic scoring, raters should keep the above criteria in mind. They should not penalize students for making statements that are irrelevant, and they should not be influenced by organization, style or mechanics. Raters should, however, look for a variety of pertinent information about the topic. In particular, the writer of a good case study should include a variety of elaborated statements about the behaviors and attitudes of the person being studied. The appearance of the person may also be mentioned if it is pertinent to one of the case study topics. For

example, if the writing task requires the student to study an admirable person, the person's appearance may be one of his/her admirable attributes, or in the case of a study of a monitor or bus driver, the person's appearance may be somehow affected by his/her job. Similarly, in a good generalization essay, a writer should include a variety of elaborated statements about the behaviors and attitudes of people cited as support for the thesis.

After the initial reading of a pair of papers, each rater must make a holistic judgment of the better paper. This should be the paper that would give a naive audience more information about the topic. It is possible that later, after the rater has analyzed the paired papers in order to determine the degree of difference between the two papers, he/she will change his/her decision about which is the better paper. If a rater does reverse his/her decision, the rater must not change the holistic evaluation. Once the holistic decision is made, the rater must not return to this section of the scoring sheet. (See Appendix B, a sample rating sheet) The holistic judgment is based on the rater's initial impression as a reader. The analytic score is based on his/her close analysis and count of information given in the paired papers. Since the basis for the holistic and analytic evaluations of the papers is different, the decisions in regard to the better paper may also differ. A rater should not be concerned if his/her holistic and analytic selections of the better paper do not concur.

The Analysis of Paired Papers to Determine the Degree of Difference Between the Papers

Since the first judgment of the better of two paired papers is holistic, the judgment is impressionistic, but guided by the rater's sense of relevance, non-repetition, variety and depth (pp.5-7). The second judgment uses the same criteria to select the better paper, but the second judgment requires careful analysis of the degree to which the criteria are met.

In order to develop a method for analyzing the papers in the study, I first had to read all the papers from the sample and discover the variety of ways in which relevant explanations were given and elaborated. I found that when students were writing case studies, most of their explanations took the form of traits of that person or his job. These traits included characteristic behavior of the particular worker ("My driver is always on time.") or the characteristic behavior of that type of worker in general ("Bus drivers drive well.") Both statements were informative and relevant to the topic. In addition to characteristic behavior, the student sometimes explained the worker's appearance ("She wears walking shoes." or "He frowns at little kids.") or attitudes ("He likes kids who say hello."). Again, the assertions were relevant since they gave information about the typical work situation of the particular driver or monitor the student studied. When writing the case study of an admirable person, the students also cited characteristic behavior, attitude and, occasionally,

appearance.

In the generalization essays, as in the case studies, the basic explanations were in the form of generalization statements. Unlike the case studies, however, the generalization topic did not focus on a particular person. Therefore, in some generalization essays, the statements that supported the thesis were especially general in nature. For example, if a student's topic were "Adolescence is a difficult time," he might have used this statement as his thesis and supported it by making such statements as, "Many teens have parental conflicts" and "Most teens have trouble doing homework in school." These are general statements about behavior and attitude. Statements about behavior and attitude also supplied the basic information in the case studies, but even these basic statements seemed somewhat specific because a particular person was being studied. In addition to such general information, there was also more specific information given in the generalization essays. For example, to support the topic that "Adolescence is a difficult time" a student might write, "My sister is sixteen, and she always has fights with her teachers." Such information, whether it is very general or somewhat specific, is relevant because it adds to the naive audience's information on the topic.

In both the case studies and the generalization essays, the able writers not only gave general information , but they also supported this general information with some of the following types of information:

1) Narrative examples; for instance, if a student commented that a bus driver was careless, the writer might elaborate on his/her point by relating a brief narrative about a morning when the driver almost skidded into a student who was waiting by the roadside. In order to be considered a narrative example, the example must be at least five main clauses long (see p.13d) and give some detail about the incident.
2) Brief, specific examples or specific generalizations to support the generalization statements. For example, if the student commented that the driver was (a) careless (a general attitude), he/she might have further elaborated his/her point by saying that the driver (b) usually stopped too fast (a more specific generalization about his careless driving), or by saying(c) that the driver almost hit a girl one morning (a specific example of a particular instance). This distinction between a and b will be important later in deciding how to determine the degree of difference between two paired papers. (see p. 16)

Not only may a writer elaborate in different ways with either brief, specific examples or generalizations or narratives of some length, but the writer may also use differing amounts of such elaboration to support the generalizations stated. Usually in this study, the students' elaborations became clearer as they became more detailed. The elaborations, as was the case with the basic generalizations statements that they support, in order to receive credit must be relevant, and non-repetitious: they must also add

either variety or depth of information. I have set up several categories to indicate the amount of elaboration that has been given by the writer. These categories will be useful later in alloting varying amount of credit for information given.

Relative Amounts of Information Given

In future discussions, I will italicize when I am referring to these categories.

a.) Unelaborated Generalization- This is the basic type of information imparted. It is a statement of what is basically believed to be true. No examples, specific generalizations, or narratives are given as explanations of the generalization.

b.) Some Elaboration- The writer gives one or two examples or specific generalizations. For example, as a specific generalization a writer might state: "Money is important to my dad. He likes luxuries." As a specific example, a writer might state: "He bought a $670.00 television."

c.) Much Elaboration- The writer gives three or four examples or specific generalizations: "Money is important to my dad. He likes luxuries. He bought a $670.00 television. He has three CB radios that he bought last summer."

d.) Very Much Elaboration- The writer gives five or six brief examples, five or six specific generalizations, or a narrative of five or six clauses. In the case of the narrative, the length of five clauses usually ensures that it is truly a narrative rather than simply an allusion to an incident.

e.) Outstanding Elaboration- Seven or more examples, specific generalizations, or narrative clauses.

Separate practice papers will later allow the rater more time to familiarize himself/herself with the various kinds and amounts of elaboration.

Divisions between these categories are arbitrary; I decided originally that there should be a new category to indicate each additional piece of information (a generalization

or a supporting generalization, example, or narrative). However, to allow for some flexibility in a rater's judgment of what is indeed fresh, relevant information, I increased the categories to include one to two pieces of information.

These categories are necessary in order to compare the paired essays for the degree of difference between them. This problem may be noted in a brief sample of paired essays that follows:

I Admire John

John is great because he helps me with my geometry and never gripes about it. He's always patient even when he has to wait a half hour for me to finish chores so we can play ball.

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	great	helps with geometry never gripes
	patient	waits for me to finish

Total: 2 elaborated generalizations, both having Some (rather than Much or Very Much) elaboration

My Bus Driver

Ralph cares about safety so he checks the bus inside and out.

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	cares about safety	checks bus inside and out

Total: one generalization with Some elaboration

The first of these two sample essays is quite obviously better, but what is the amount of difference between the

two papers? My procedure for comparison is to eliminate the similarity, which in this case is one generalization elaborated Some. The first essay, then, has an additional generalization that has Some elaboration, and the second paper has an additional unelaborated generalization. The difference is quite obviously Some elaboration in the second paper. This comparison is fairly easy to make because the essays do not contain a variety of the different possible types of elaboration. (see p. 13) In these two essays, there are only examples of Some elaboration. The method of finding the amount of difference by disregarding the types of information common to both essays and then comparing the information remaining, only works if the information is of the same type. Such difficulties are clear in a comparison of the following essays:

Grand Old Grandpa Essay 1

Gramps is really active. I saw him climb a rope in our barn that was fifty feet high. His hands slipped near the top, but he just swung over the loft. He didn't stop there. He threw down ten bales of hay to the horses before he climbed down the rope. He even offered to climb the rope again to get the straw down. He is my friend too.

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	active	1 very much elaborated
	friend	

Total: 1 very much elaborated generalization and 1 unelaborated generalization

My Driver Essay 2

My bus driver is nice. He lets us sit where we want. He is punctual because he's at my house at 7:30 a.m. every day. We never get hurt so I guess he's safety minded.

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	nice	sit anywhere
	punctual	at my house
	safety-minded	no one hurt

Total: 3 generalizations elaborated Some

The first essay has a very much elaborated generalization and one unelaborated generalization. The second essay has three generalizations elaborated some. Since the types of elaboration are different, no common points of comparison are apparent. In order to proceed with this comparison, there must be some way of equating the various types of elaboration with each other as well as with the unelaborated generalizations.

A Comparison of the Various Forms of Information Given

It is not possible with complete confidence to ascribe a certain number of points to each of the various types of elaboration. According to Richard-Lloyd-Jones, who was responsible for the development of primary trait scoring, elaboration is not an absolute. He feels that many variables interact in a writing task, and it is, therefore, necessary to "make the borderline between score points a matter of individual judgment about how all of the features of the writing combine." (letter from Richard Lloyd-Jones at the University of Iowa on October 2, 1978) I agree with R. Lloyd-Jones that

the scoring cannot be absolute. I do, however, feel that informative tasks such as these, in contrast to persuasive or expressive tasks, lend themselves more readily to the counting and alloting of score points. The aim of these essays is not to sway the reader's opinions or affect the reader's emotions. The aim is to give relevant information. Information by nature seems more quantitative than emotions. As is suggested by Lloyd-Jones, I have set up standards for the achievement of the informative aim of the task.

With these standards in mind (see pp.5-7), I have used my own holistic judgments of the essays to draw some comparisons between the various types of information found in the essays in the study. For example, a student may list one generalization and give some elaboration: "My driver is patient. He waits for kids at their houses every day. He lets the girls say good bye to their friends before they get off the bus." This generalization (patient) with the two elaborations satisfies my need for an explanation of the driver's attitudes as well as three unelaborated generalizations found in another fictitious paper: "My driver is patient. He works hard. He drives carefully." The first writer offers more depth of elaboration, but the second writer offers more variety of generalization. In both cases the writers are giving new information that was not already assumed by the reader. They are fulfilling the criteria of relevance, non-repetition, variety and depth.

I have developed some equations that are based on these criteria, particularly the criteria of depth and variety of

elaboration. My basic premise is that 3 unelaborated generalizations are equal to 1 generalization with some elaboration. Please note the following examples:

	Generalization	Elaboration
1)	He is my friend.	He does my homework.
		He helps me cheat on tests.
2)	He is my friend.	
	He is a good athlete.	
	He is a good actor.	

The first example contains three new pieces of information ("news" that the reader did not know before). In the second example, there are also three new pieces of information. The only difference is that the first example contains one generalization that is elaborated some. The elaboration adds depth to the basic informative statement: "He is my friend." On the other hand, the second example gives a variety of information, but none of it is elaborated in detail. Either depth of elaboration (example 1) or variety of elaboration (example 2) gives the reader three new informative statements.

Notice that the following table is based on the premise that 3 unelaborated generalizations = 1 elaborated some. Since some elaboration consists of 1-2 elaborations, the rest of the conversions are simply multiples. For example, if 2 elaborations (some) = 1 some, then 4 elaborations (much) = 2 some since both sides of the original equation must be multiplied by two.

Conversion Table

Category	Number of Evaluations	Number of Some Elab.
3 unelaborated gen.	= 0 elaborations	= 1
1 Some	= 1-2	= 1
1 Much	= 3-4	= 2
1 Very Much	= 5-6	= 3
1 Outstanding	= 7 or more	= 4

According to the above table, if a student writer continuously listed generalizations without any elaboration, he/she would be somewhat penalized since he/she would need 3 generalizations to qualify for 1 some credit, but the 1 some credit could be reached by a student writer who only gave one elaboration for a generalization. In the same way, a writer who only gave one generalization and much elaboration would have to double the maximum number of some elaboration (2 elaborations) in order to receive double the some credit. This was done deliberately since the better papers will give many generalizations and elaborate each to some extent, thereby providing both depth and variety rather than simply listing many unelaborated generalizations or elaborating one generalization a great deal. Both variety and depth are important in a good paper.

Using the table that appears on this page, the rater may now complete the analysis from page 16. Essay 1 consisted of 1 very much elaborated and one unelaborated generalization. Essay 2 consisted of 3 generalizations elaborated some. According to the table on this page, one very much

elaborated generalization (Essay 1) is equal to three generalizations with some elaboration (essay 2) so the difference between the two essays is one unelaborated generalization in Essay 1. The remaining problem is deciding upon the importance of this difference of one unelaborated generalization. It appears to be a rather slight difference. This does seem to be the case in some student papers. A number of papers, however, showed much greater differences. I have developed another table to explain how to decide whether there is little, some, or a great difference between paired papers. The table appears below:

Degree of Difference

A Great Difference	Some Difference	Little Difference
3	2	1
one very much elab.	one much elab.	one some elab.
one much plus one some	two some elab.	1-2 unelab. plus 1 some
three some elab.	four-six unelab.	1-3 unelab.
seven unelab.	four-six unelab.	1-3 unelab.
one outstanding elab.	four-six unelab.	1-3 unelab.

An example of one pair of papers will illustrate how to use this table.

I Admire Bob

I admire this one boy alot. He lets me help him work on his car. We change his spark plugs and sometimes we even do a wheel alignment. We wash and wax it too. He's an athlete too. He can arm wrestle me down in two minutes

and I'm pretty strong from carrying milk pales at home. I don't act much like a girl, but he doesn't make fun of me. He likes to keep busy. I admire Bob alot.

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	Lets help	spark plugs, alignment wash and wax
	athlete	arm wrestle
	make fun	not acting girlish
	keep busy	

Total: 1 much elaborated, 2 some elaborated, 1 unelaborated generalization.

The Monitor

I watched a cafeteria monitor for a while this week. The monitor seems bored. She has some things to do. She keeps kids quiet and not messing up the cafeteria.

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	seemed bored	
	things to do	quiet not messing up

Total: 1 some elaborated and 1 unelaborated

Calculations to Arrive at the Degree of Difference

Essay 1:	1 Much	2 Some	1 Unelaborated
Essay 2:		2 Some	1 Unelaborated

Difference = 1 Much

Better Essay = #1

Degree of Difference = 3

According to the table (p. 20) one much plus 1 some qualifies essay #1 as 3, a great deal different from essay #2.

GENERALIZATIONS AND THEIR ELABORATIONS: IDENTIFYING THEM AND ALLOTTING CREDIT

Distinguishing Generalizations from their Elaborations

All of the essays in this study use a generalization statement as their thesis. This thesis is explained by the use of less abstract generalization statements. For example, the statement that "most teens are responsible" may be explained by less abstract generalization statements:

1) "Many responsible teens are praised in news stories."

2) "The teens in my neighborhood are responsible."

The second statement might itself be elaborated further, for example, the more specific generalization: "The teens in my neighborhood usually have jobs after school."

A Schematic of the Distribution of the Above Generalizations

Most Teens Are Responsible

Teens in the neighborhood — Teens in the News

Jobs After School

(A good paper has both variety and depth of elaboration so it is important to note the distribution of information rather than simply counting generalization statements.)

Since not only the thesis statements may be elaborated but also the generalization statements that support the thesis, guidelines are necessary to distinguish between the basic generalizations and the elaborations.

Guidelines:

1) If a generalization is elaborated, it can be counted as an independent generalization. Some examples are: "Money is important. Food must be bought with money, and food

prices have gone up greatly this past year."

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	Money is important	
	Food must be bought	Food is costly this year

Total: 1 independent generalization, 1 generalization elaborated Some

The thesis statement is always counted as an independent generalization. If the thesis were followed by unelaborated generalization statements, those statements would be counted as independent generalizations and listed under the thesis. Some examples are: "Money is important. Food must be bought. People need clothes."

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	Money is important	
	Food must be bought	
	People need clothes	

Only those statements that elaborated one of the generalizations supporting the thesis should be listed under the elaboration column.

2) There are a number of positions that elaborations may occupy in relation to the generalizations they support.

3) Frequently in student papers, the elaboration follows the generalization.: "A driver has to be careful to get the kids to school and home safely. If a kid gets hurt, it's the driver's fault."

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	Careful	to school and home
		if student is hurt. . .

In the case studies the elaboration may take the form of a condition under which the generalization takes place or is true, as in the first elaboration, or it may simply be an example, as in the second elaboration.

b) Examples may sometimes precede generalizations: "Uncle Pete has nice hair and a great smile. I guess he's good-looking."

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration	
	good-looking	nice hair	examples
		great smile	

c) Examples may both precede and follow the generalization (a combination of numbers 2 and 3 above).

d) Examples may appear in the same sentence as the generalization. An example is: "The monitor has to work for a few hours, and that is hard because the pay is low then."

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	hard	few hours
		low pay

Credit Allotment

In the previous example, the generalizations in the case studies did not necessarily deal with the person studied. In the case studies of the bus drivers and monitors, that students wrote as pretests and posttest, the generalizations may be about the job itself. The writing task quite obviously requires information about not only the person but also his job as well so statements about either the person or his job should be allotted credit. However, there are some other points of

credit allotment that are not so evident and may require guidelines.

Guidelines:

1) In rating the case studies, raters should give credit if attitudes are explained with examples that indicate conditions under which the attitudes are true. For example, a student might write: "It makes the monitor happy with his job when kids are friendly, keep quiet, or say nice things."

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration	
	Happy	Friendly	
		Quiet	Conditions
		Say nice things	

2) In order to be alloted credit, writers should write examples or narratives in support of a generalization statement, and write generalization statements in support of either the thesis or another generalization statement. In most instances the elaboration should be located in close proximity to the generalization as is indicated in #2 a-d. However, there are two other common types of organization that may make it difficult for the rater to locate the generalization that the elaboration is supporting.

The following types of organization produce generalization and elaborations that are related clearly enough to receive credit:

a) The writer may list all of the generalizations in the introduction to the essay, then in the separate paragraphs which follow the introduction, list the examples that

support the generalizations.

Example A:

I admire my Uncle. He is kind. He is humorous. Most of all, he is fat.

My uncle is so kind that he helps all animals. . . .He also helps all of my friends. . . .

Unc is really funny too. I remember one time when he took me to the zoo. . . .

He's so fat that he looks pregnant.

Rating:	Generalization	Elaboration
	I admire my uncle	
	kind	helps animals helps friends
	funny	zoo
	so fat that he looks pregnant	

Total: 2 elaborated some, 2 unelaborated

b) The writer may write a lengthy example in a paragraph following the generalization.

Example B:

John is my favorite person. I like him a lot in school.

I would like to tell you one such story that will show you why I like him so much. . . .

Rating	Generalization	Elaboration
	John is my favorite person	
	like him in school	narrative that follows

In both examples a and b the elaboration is given credit even though it does not appear in the same paragraph

as the generalization that it is supporting.

3) If a bit of information is necessary to the sense of the sentence, then it should not be counted as elaboration. An example is:"My father likes jobs where he can work alone." The basic generalization is that the man likes jobs where a certain condition exists. It would not represent the writer's meaning to say that he likes jobs. Working alone is more than just an elaboration.

4) The same generalization is not listed as a generalization more than once unless the generalization reappears in a new paragraph with more than one new elaboration. (More than one elaboration is necessary to qualify for a new elaboration category since there is a flexibility of one elaboration in the categories, and the generalization would already have been given credit as being elaborated.) The following is a possible example:

"Bus drivers have many responsibilities. They have to watch everything inside and outside the bus. They have to be patient when kids holler and yell. Some kids really have sore throats when they get to school. They have to make sure the right child gets on the bus. They have to be responsible for everyone. Drivers need to be careful. They have to help kids during safety drills.

Several intervening paragraphs

Bus drivers have to be patient about waiting for school children. Many don't get on the bus on time. . . .Drivers have to be careful. They check the bus' oil and tires. . .

They drive slowly. . . ."

Rating	Generalization	Elaboration
	responsibility	inside and out right child
	patient when holler and yell	sore throat
	driver careful	helps during drills
	patient when waiting	not on bus on time
	driver careful	checks bus for oil and tires and drives slowly

In the above example, responsibility is stated at the opening and near the close of the first paragraph, but the generalization that drivers are responsible is only given credit once, not twice. Another aspect of this paper that might make it difficult to rate is the presence of irrelevancies or separate generalizations between a generalization and its elaborations. This occurs in the paragraph when the generalization about patience intervenes between the elaborations for the first generalization listed above. Also, there should be many intervening generalizations before a generalization is repeated in the generalization column. A repeated generalization is never given credit unless it is elaborated with two or more elaborations as is the case in the generalization about drivers being careful.

5) If two generalizations or elaborations consist of one word joined by and, or are in close proximity to each other and mean the same, they should be counted as a single unit. Several examples are: "She knows and understands kids.

I respect and admire him. A driver must be patient with kids even when they are noisy; she keeps her cool but uses discipline."

Each of the first two ficticious statements is an example of one unelaborated generalization. The third statement is the generalization, patient, with "noisy" and "discipline" providing some elaboration. My reasoning is that "keeps her cool" is the the same as patient. Discipline, however, qualifies the generalization that the driver is patient, so discipline counts as an elaboration.

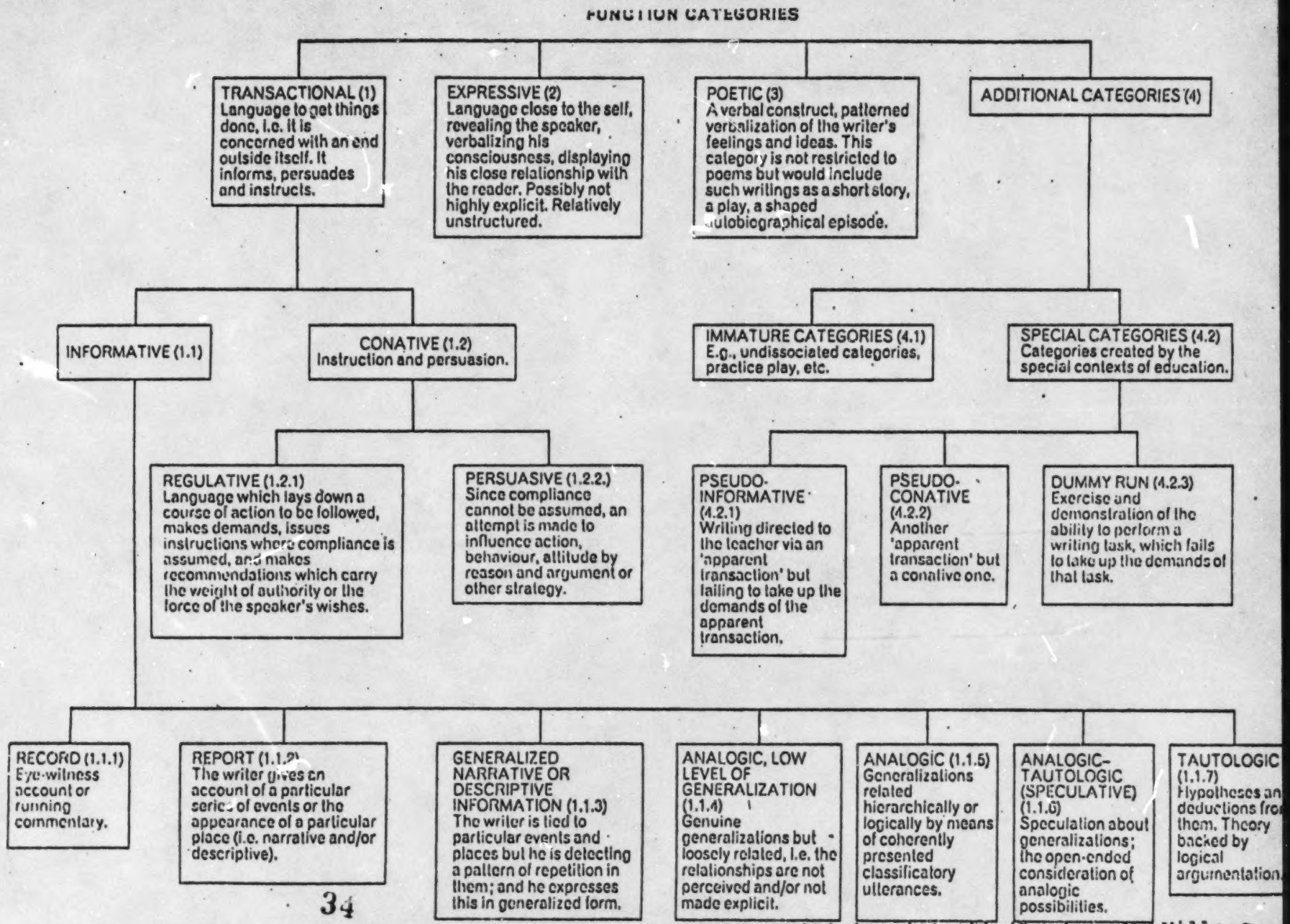
6) Raters should count statements of contrast as elaboration because they add information about a statement that is generally true : "She stretches the truth. She's not a real liar." The second statement qualifies the first one.

7) Raters should disregard questions because they do not provide new information.

Conclusion

Raters should consider the above guidelines in recording the generalizations and their elaborations that will be allotted credit as relevant pieces of information. Most importantly, a rater should be consistent in applying these guidelines. Since each rater will be subtracting his/her own evaluations of two papers in order to determine the degree of difference between the two papers, it is crucial for the rater to treat both papers equally in order to discern the difference between the two papers.

APPENDIX A


FUNCTION CATEGORIES
TRANSACTIONAL (1)
Language to get things done, i.e. it is concerned with an end outside itself. It informs, persuades and instructs.
EXPRESSIVE (2)
Language close to the self, revealing the speaker, verbalizing his consciousness, displaying his close relationship with the reader. Possibly not highly explicit. Relatively unstructured.
POETIC (3)
A verbal construct, patterned verbalization of the writer's feelings and ideas. This category is not restricted to poems but would include such writings as a short story, a play, a shaped autobiographical episode.
ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES (4)
INFORMATIVE (1.1)
CONATIVE (1.2)
Instruction and persuasion.
IMMATURE CATEGORIES (4.1)
E.g., undissociated categories, practice play, etc.
SPECIAL CATEGORIES (4.2)
Categories created by the special contexts of education.
REGULATIVE (1.2.1)
Language which lays down a course of action to be followed, makes demands, issues instructions where compliance is assumed, and makes recommendations which carry the weight of authority or the force of the speaker's wishes.
PERSUASIVE (1.2.2.)
Since compliance cannot be assumed, an attempt is made to influence action, behaviour, attitude by reason and argument or other strategy.
PSEUDO-INFORMATIVE (4.2.1)
Writing directed to the teacher via an 'apparent transaction' but failing to take up the demands of the apparent transaction.
PSEUDO-CONATIVE (4.2.2)
Another 'apparent transaction' but a conative one.
DUMMY RUN (4.2.3)
Exercise and demonstration of the ability to perform a writing task, which fails to take up the demands of that task.
RECORD (1.1.1)
Eye-witness account or running commentary.
REPORT (1.1.2)
The writer gives an account of a particular series of events or the appearance of a particular place (i.e. narrative and/or descriptive).
GENERALIZED NARRATIVE OR DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION (1.1.3)
The writer is tied to particular events and places but he is detecting a pattern of repetition in them; and he expresses this in generalized form.
ANALOGIC, LOW LEVEL OF GENERALIZATION (1.1.4)
Genuine generalizations but loosely related, i.e. the relationships are not perceived and/or not made explicit.
ANALOGIC (1.1.5)
Generalizations related hierarchically or logically by means of coherently presented classificatory utterances.
ANALOGIC-TAUTOLOGIC (SPECULATIVE) (1.1.6)
Speculation about generalizations; the open-ended consideration of analogic possibilities.
TAUTOLOGIC (1.1.7)
Hypotheses and deductions from them. Theory backed by logical argumentation.

SOURCE: James Britton et al., The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18) (London: MacMillan Education Ltd., 1975), Appendix.

APPENDIX B: RATING SHEET

Directions: The following is a reproduction of a rating sheet used in the study. In the actual study, however, the holistic evaluation appeared on the front of the rating sheet, and the analytic evaluation appeared on the back of the same rating sheet.

I. Holistic Evaluation

Paper Numbers: _____ and _____
Better Paper: #_____

II. Analytic Evaluation

Paper Number: ____

	Generalization	Elaboration

Total: _____

Paper Number: _____

	Generalization	Elaboration

Total: _____

BETTER PAPER BASED UPON ANALYSIS: # _____
DEGREE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO PAPERS: _____

SOURCES CONSULTED IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTRUMENT

Britton, James and others. The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18). London: McMillan Education Ltd. 1975.

Kinneavy, James. A Theory of Discourse. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971.

_____. "Theories of Composition and Actual Writing." Kansas English 59 (Dec. 1973): 3-17.

Lloyd-Jones, Richard. 2 October 1978, personal letter.

_____. "Primary Trait Scoring." In Evaluating Writing, pp. 33-66. Edited by Charles R. Cooper and Lee Odell. Buffalo, New York: National Council of Teachers of English, 1977.